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Montana Code Annotated 2017

TITLE 45. CRIMES

CHAPTER 8. OFFENSES AGAINST PUBLIC ORDER

Part 2. Offensive, Indecent, and Inhumane Conduct

Privacy In Communications

45-8-213. Privacy in communications. (1) Except as provided in **69-6-104**, a person commits the offense of violating privacy in communications if the person knowingly or purposely:

(a) with the purpose to terrify, intimidate, threaten, harass, annoy, or offend, communicates with a person by electronic communication and uses obscene, lewd, or profane language, suggests a lewd or lascivious act, or threatens to inflict injury or physical harm to the person or property of the person. The use of obscene, lewd, or profane language or the making of a threat or lewd or lascivious suggestions is prima facie evidence of an intent to terrify, intimidate, threaten, harass, annoy, or offend.

(b) uses an electronic communication to attempt to extort money or any other thing of value from a person or to disturb by repeated communications the peace, quiet, or right of privacy of a person at the place where the communications are received;

(c) records or causes to be recorded a conversation by use of a hidden electronic or mechanical device that reproduces a human conversation without the knowledge of all parties to the conversation. This subsection (1)(c) does not apply to:

(i) elected or appointed public officials or to public employees when the transcription or recording is done in the performance of official duty;

(ii) persons speaking at public meetings;

(iii) persons given warning of the transcription or recording, and if one person provides the warning, either party may record; or

(iv) ~~a health care facility, as defined in 50-5-101, or a government agency that deals with health care if the recording is of a health care emergency telephone communication made to the facility or agency.~~

(✓) *victims of abuse*
(2) Except as provided in **69-6-104**, a person commits the offense of violating privacy in communications if the person purposely intercepts an electronic communication. This subsection does not apply to elected or appointed public officials or to public employees when the interception is done in the performance of official duty or to persons given warning of the interception.

(3) (a) A person convicted of the offense of violating privacy in communications shall be fined an amount not to exceed \$500 or be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months, or both.

(b) On a second conviction of subsection (1)(a) or (1)(b), a person shall be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 1 year or be fined an amount not to exceed \$1,000, or both.

(c) On a third or subsequent conviction of subsection (1)(a) or (1)(b), a person shall be imprisoned in the state prison for a term not to exceed 5 years or be fined an amount not to exceed \$10,000, or both.

(4) "Electronic communication" means any transfer between persons of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photo-optical system.

History: En. 94-8-114 by Sec. 1, Ch. 513, L. 1973; amd. Sec. 33, Ch. 359, L. 1977; R.C.M. 1947, 94-8-114; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 356, L. 1979; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 177, L. 1991; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 354, L. 1999; amd. Sec. 8, Ch. 77, L. 2001; amd. Sec. 4, Ch. 344, L. 2003; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 435, L. 2005; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 214, L. 2007.

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